

Chapter 2

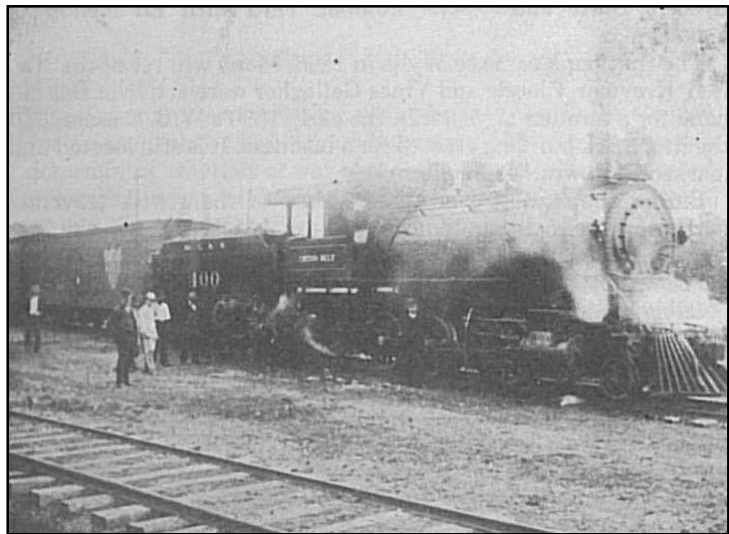
Context

INTRODUCTION

Wylie is located about 30 miles northeast of downtown Dallas and approximately 30 miles south of McKinney. It is in the southeastern portion of Collin County within the Blackland Prairie Region of North Central Texas. Wylie has an estimated 2009 population of 41,300 and is approximately 80% built-out (roughly 3,300 acres remain undeveloped or as crop/farm land). Wylie's anticipated build-out population is 52,709. In total, Wylie has an impressive 3,600 acres of floodplain within the City limits which constitutes 21% of the land cover in Wylie. The city is uniquely situated between two major lakes (Lake Lavon and Lake Ray Hubbard) which provide recreation opportunities and drinking water for much of the region. Wylie has experienced rapid growth over the last two decades and many new residential areas in the western and southern portions of the city have been constructed on converted agricultural land. The rapid development pattern, as will be discussed later in this chapter, has resulted in a dichotomy between the older, historic core of Wylie and the newer suburban-style subdivisions that have been built on the city's fringes.

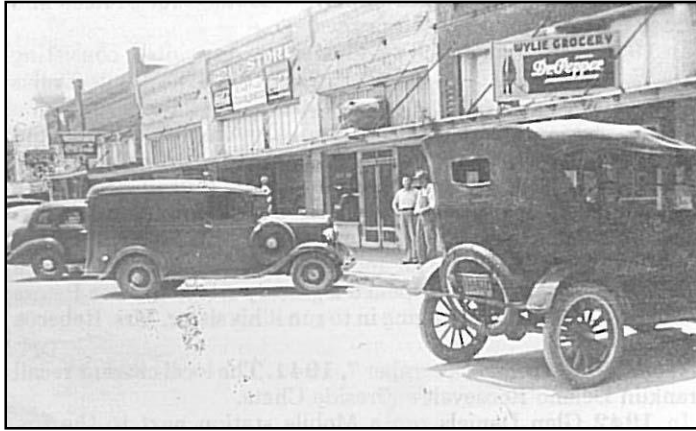
BACKGROUND & HISTORY

Wylie was established as a city in 1886 along the rights-of-way of the Gulf, Colorado, and Santa Fe Railroads. The engineer in charge was Colonel W.D. Wylie from Paris, Texas. A railroad official and civil war veteran, Wylie had aspirations of having a town named after him. As a selling point to accomplish his goal, he promised many things to the City, one of which was to buy the local baseball team new uniforms. Upon arrival of the post office in June 1886, the name "Wylie" became official, and by the summer of 1886, Colonel Wylie began laying out city lots with the 100 acres of land he had purchased. In 1887, the St. Louis and Southwestern (Cottonbelt) rail line arrived in Wylie from Greenville to the west.



The Cottonbelt Railroad's first train into Wylie in 1887 is shown with some of the local people.

Wylie's first mayor was Howard Pickett from the nearby town of Nickleville and the City's first marshal was Bill Phillips. Although, most may remember Ham "Peanuts" Howerly as Wylie's most respected marshal. The most "remembered car" ever in Wylie was owned by Mitt Willis. It was a model-T that he bought new in 1924 and drove until his death in the 1970's. Spiritual



This photo was made in the 1930's. The 1924 Ford under the Wylie Grocery sign was that of Mitt Willis.



Farmers have always played an essential part in the "Life of Wylie." This picture was taken March 23, 1896 by a photographer from the G.K. Miller Studios in Wylie.



This picture was taken in February 1900 in the old First National Bank.

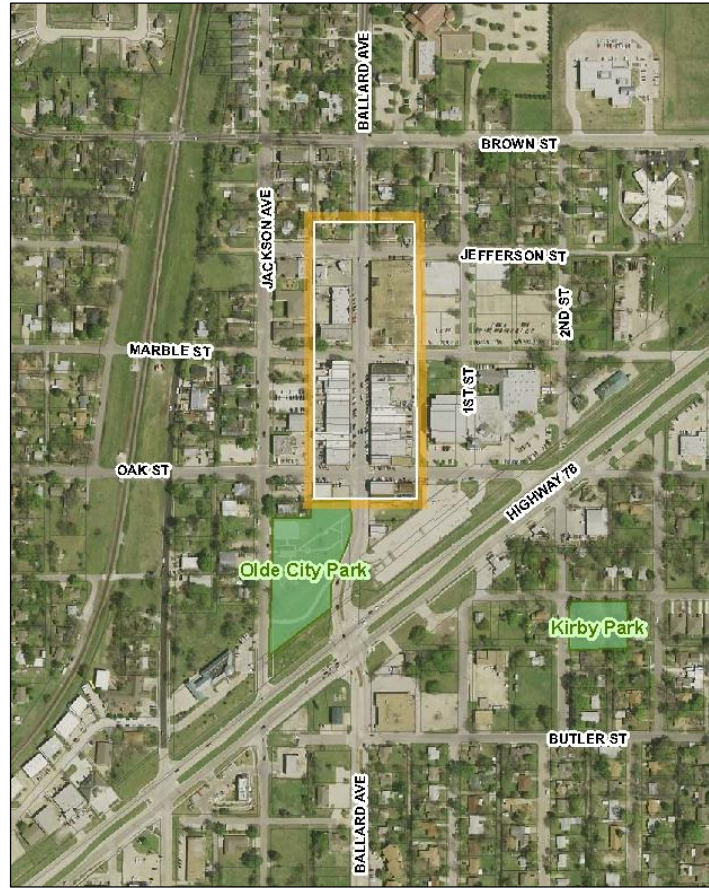
growth of the town began when the nearby towns of Dump, St. Paul, Nickleville and Eureka brought in five churches, one of which became the oldest Catholic Church in this region. Wylie's major economic base was farming, which became the foothold of the community with cotton, onions and wheat being the major crop productions. Cotton was the leading crop and was known as the King. It had such an impact on the economy that schools were scheduled around the growing seasons so children could help out in the fields. Onion farming was also important, and for some time, Wylie was the "Onion Capital" of the United States. Wheat, however, is still the most important crop of the local agricultural economy.

The first local newspaper came to Wylie in 1889 named "The Wylie Rustler." The newspaper went through several name changes until reaching its current name, "The Wylie News." Today, *The Wylie News* is the largest publication in Collin County.

The First National Bank was established in 1896 and was the only bank in Wylie until the First State Bank was organized in 1912. The First National Bank building was the first brick building in Wylie, erected by W.B. Cannon, and still standing and marked in downtown Wylie. The new First State Bank was completed in 1963 at its present location at East Oak and Ballard.

Until 1951, the Cottonbelt and Santa Fe tracks intersected about one mile east of town, but with the construction of the Lavon Lake dam (between 1948 and 1953), the Santa Fe rail line was relocated. Today, Lake Lavon (owned

by the United States government and operated by the US Army Corps of Engineers) provides ample recreation opportunities for the region as well as drinking water for many of the surrounding cities (the North Texas Municipal Water District, which is headquartered in Wylie, treats and distributes water from the lake). The construction of the lake, as well as the City's floodplain management practices, has resulted in reduced flooding in Wylie. The construction of SH 78 along the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe rail line split the town in half, but the historic downtown was able to remain intact along Ballard Street north of Highway 78 (see the map at right).

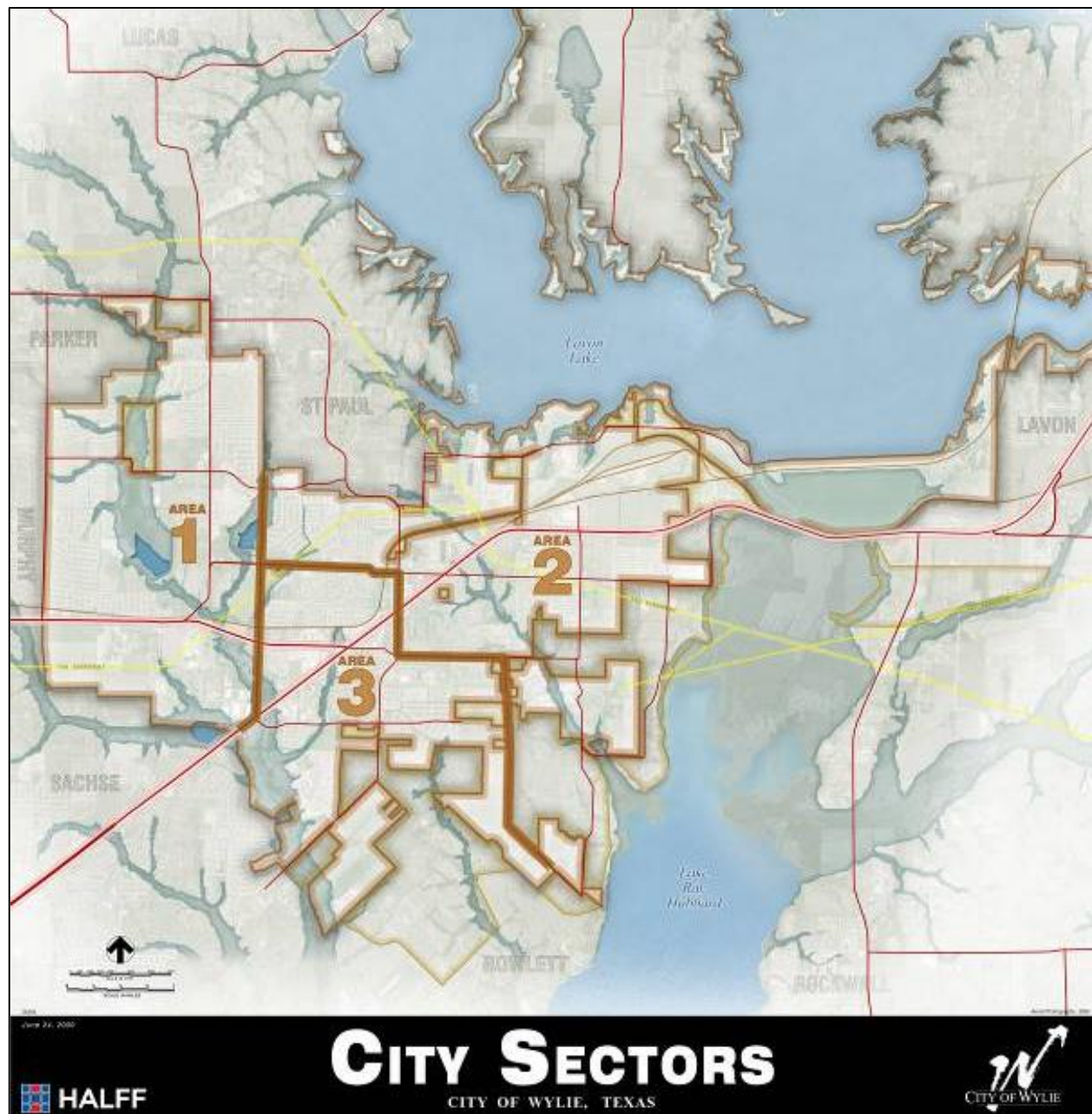


Wylie continued to grow in the 1960s and 1970s as the North Texas Municipal Water District created new jobs and the urban growth of Dallas spurred suburban development. Between 1970 and 1990, Wylie's population more than tripled and from 1990 to 2000 the population nearly doubled again. This rampant population growth, as will be discussed later in this chapter, has pressured the City of Wylie to act very quickly to meet the needs of a rapidly growing and changing community.



JURISDICTION & PLANNING AREAS

While informed by the context of the surrounding areas, this Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan includes detailed analysis and recommendations only for areas located in Wylie's city limits and extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). In order to ensure that input and recommendations are gained and created equitably, the Planning Team divided the City into three planning areas which are used in the administration of the Citizen Attitude Survey (telephone survey) and for the recommendations, which will be made in Chapter 6. These three areas correspond with the City's three existing Park Zones. Of the total estimated 2009 population of 41,300 (excluding ETJ), 36% of the respondents surveyed live in the West Park Zone (Area 1 on the map), 40% of the respondents live in the East Park Zone (Area 2), and 25% live in the Central Park Zone (Area 3).



DEMOGRAPHICS

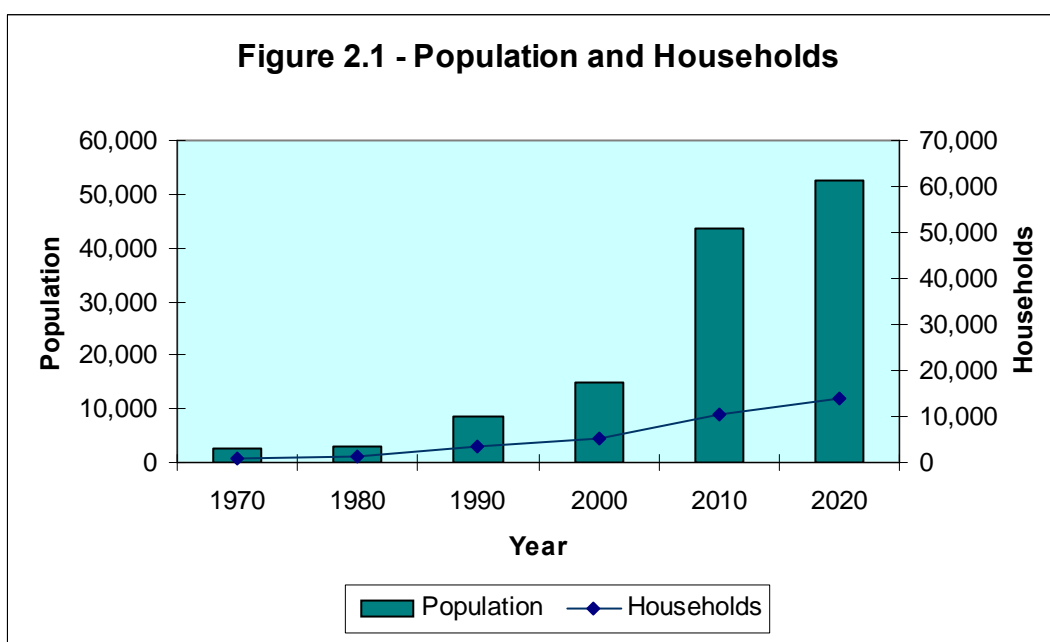
The following is a review of past and present demographic data, including population, housing, and employment growth forecasts for the City of Wylie. Understanding who lives in Wylie and the City's growth projections informs direction for future decisions and actions.

Table 2.1 Population History and Forecast 1970 – 2030						
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population¹	2,675	3,152	8,716	15,016	43,566	52,709
Households	892	1,118	3,496	5,085	10,466	13,821
Employment²				5,144	6,586	8,659
1. Estimated / Projected; 1970-2000 data provided by U.S. Census Bureau; 2010-2020 data provided by the City of Wylie, TX. 2. Employment opportunities within the city, not total employees residing within the city						

Sources: City of Wylie; NCTCOG Population Forecasts; US Census Bureau

<http://www.nctcog.org/ris/demographics/forecast/query.asp?thefield=citycode&thevalue=4705>

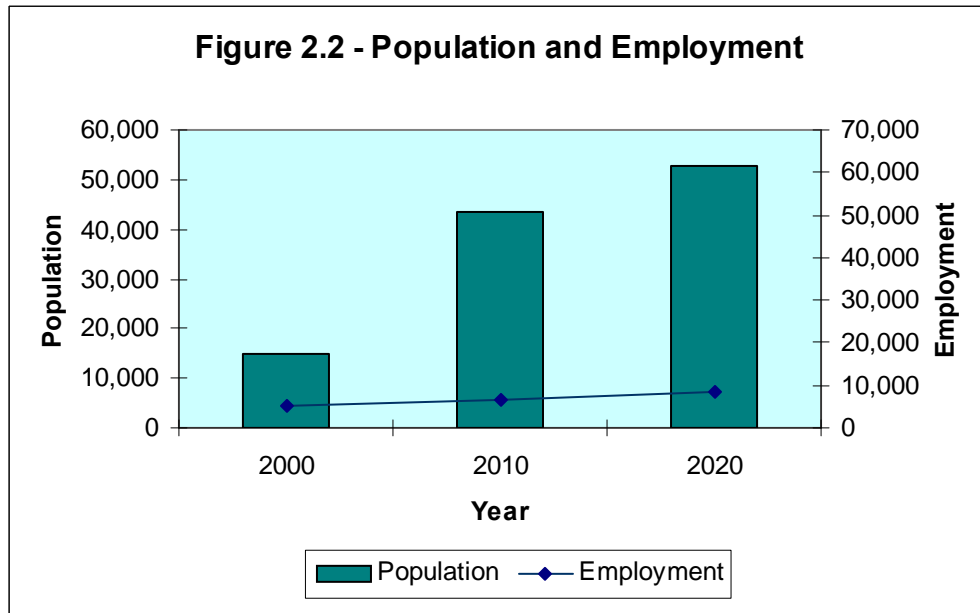
<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen1990/cph2/cph-2-1-1.pdf>



Sources: City of Wylie; NCTCOG Population Forecasts; US Census Bureau

<http://www.nctcog.org/ris/demographics/forecast/query.asp?thefield=citycode&thevalue=4705>

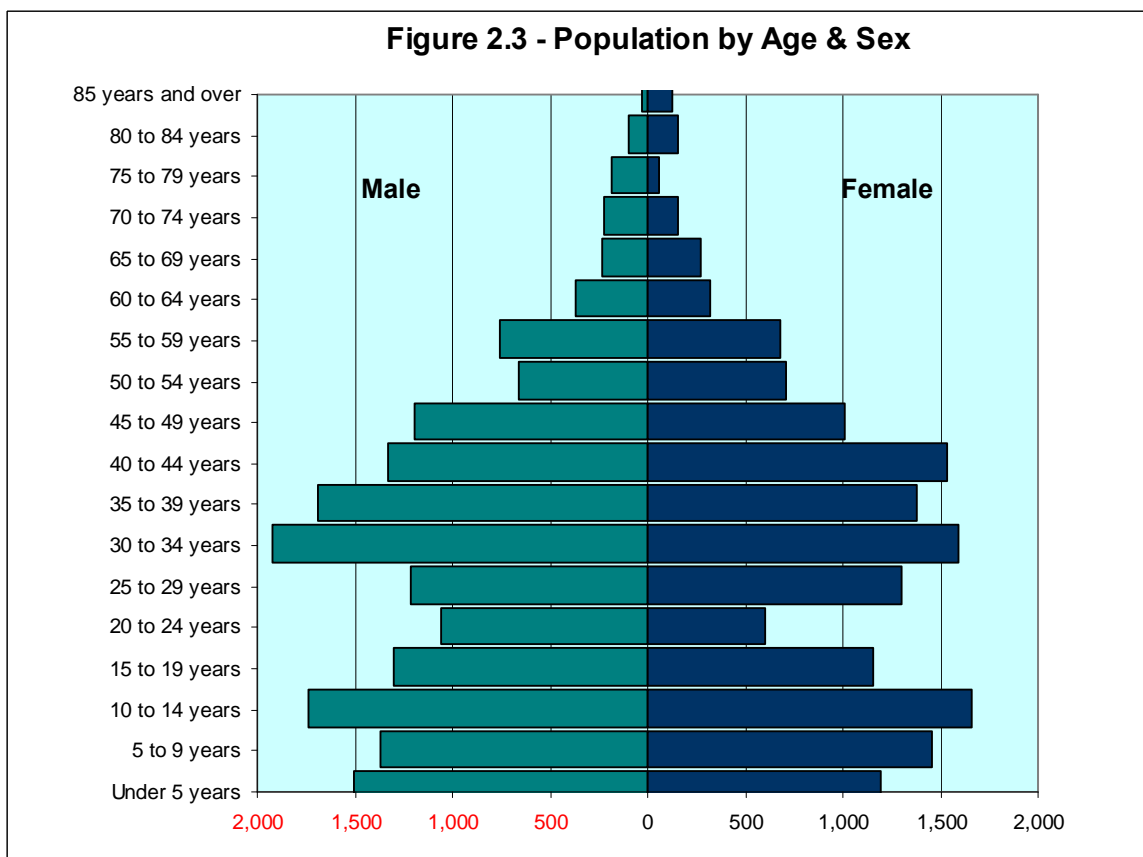
<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen1990/cph2/cph-2-1-1.pdf>



Sources: City of Wylie; NCTCOG Population Forecasts; US Census Bureau

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<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen1990/cph2/cph-2-1-1.pdf>



Source: 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (US Census Bureau)

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Table 2.2 Racial Characteristics	
Race	Percentage
White	79.70%
Black or African American	9.40%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.80%
Asian	4.90%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.00%
Some other race	5.20%
Two or more races	1.90%
Hispanic or Latino*	18.40%
*Hispanic/Latino is considered an ethnicity, not a race by the US Census. This is the percentage of the total population that identify with the Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.	

Source: 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (US Census Bureau)
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Table 2.3 Educational Attainment by Sex*	
Education Attainment	Percentage
Less than 9th grade	4.00%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	7.10%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	26.40%
Some college, no degree	26.80%
Associate degree	9.30%
Bachelor's degree	19.90%
Graduate or professional degree	6.60%
*Individuals age 25 and over	

Source: 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (US Census Bureau)
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Table 2.4 Household Income, Housing Value, and Homeownership	
	Median / Average
Annual Household Income	\$69,189
Value for Owner-Occupied Housing Units	\$147,600
Gross Monthly Rent	\$993
Number of Households	9,977
People per Household	3.23
Homeownership Rate	82.80%

Source: 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (US Census Bureau)
http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=16000US4880356&-qr_name=ACS_2007_3YR_G00_DP3YR4&-ds_name=&-lang=en&-redoLog=false

Table 2.5 Occupation of Employed Civilian Population Aged 16 Years and Over (16,046 total employees)	
Management, Professional and Related	38.10%
Service	13.00%
Sales and Office	29.50%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	0.00%
Construction, Extraction and Maintenance	11.90%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	7.50%

Source: 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (US Census Bureau)
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Table 2.6
Industry of Employed Civilian Population Aged 16 Years and Over
(jobs within Wylie)

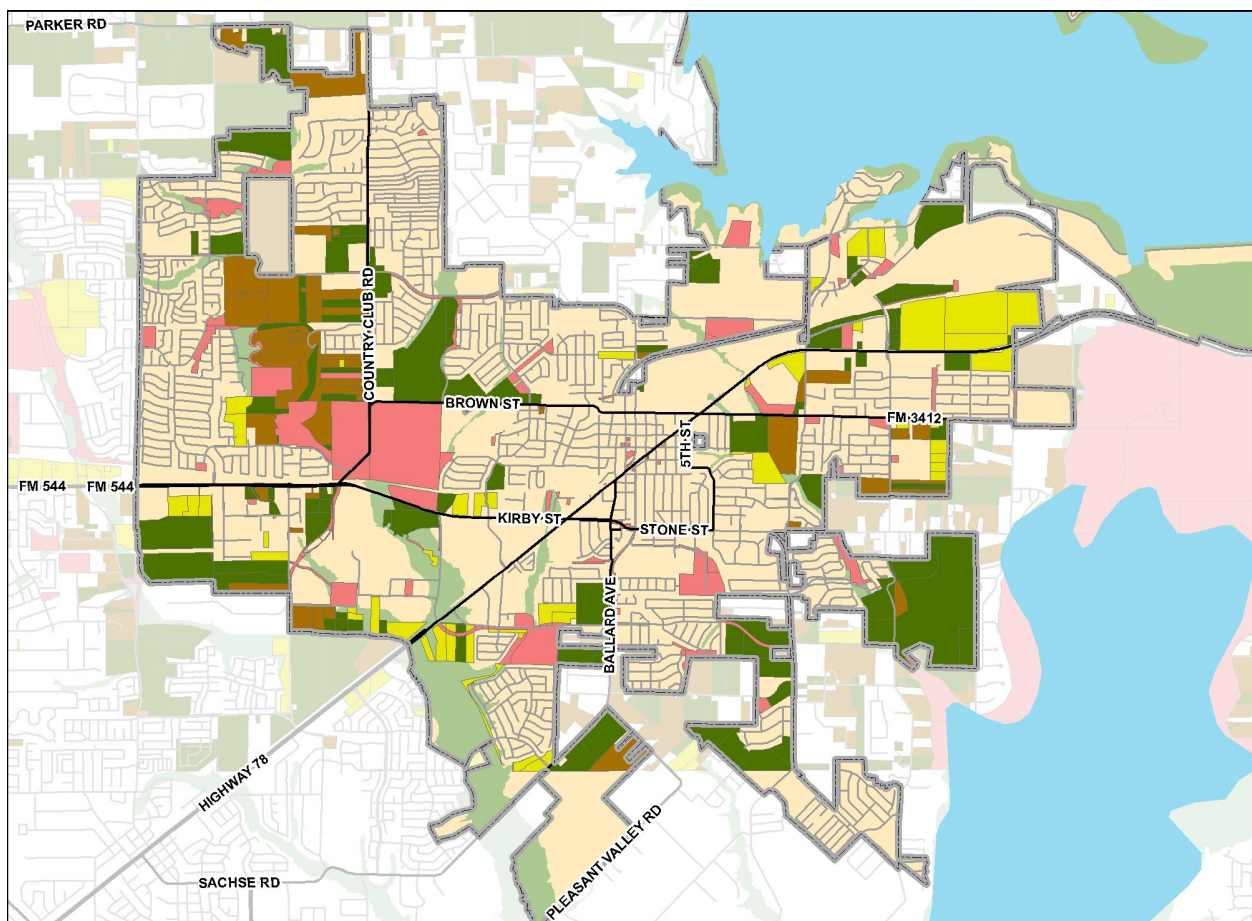
Industry of Employment	Percentage
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.30%
Construction	10.60%
Manufacturing	8.50%
Wholesale trade	4.20%
Retail trade	12.00%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5.60%
Information	4.90%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	9.70%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	13.20%
Educational, health and social services	16.10%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	6.20%
Other services (except public administration)	4.80%
Public administration	4.00%

Source: 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (US Census Bureau)
http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=16000US4880356&-qr_name=ACS_2007_3YR_G00_DP3YR3&-ds_name=&-lang=en&-redoLog=false

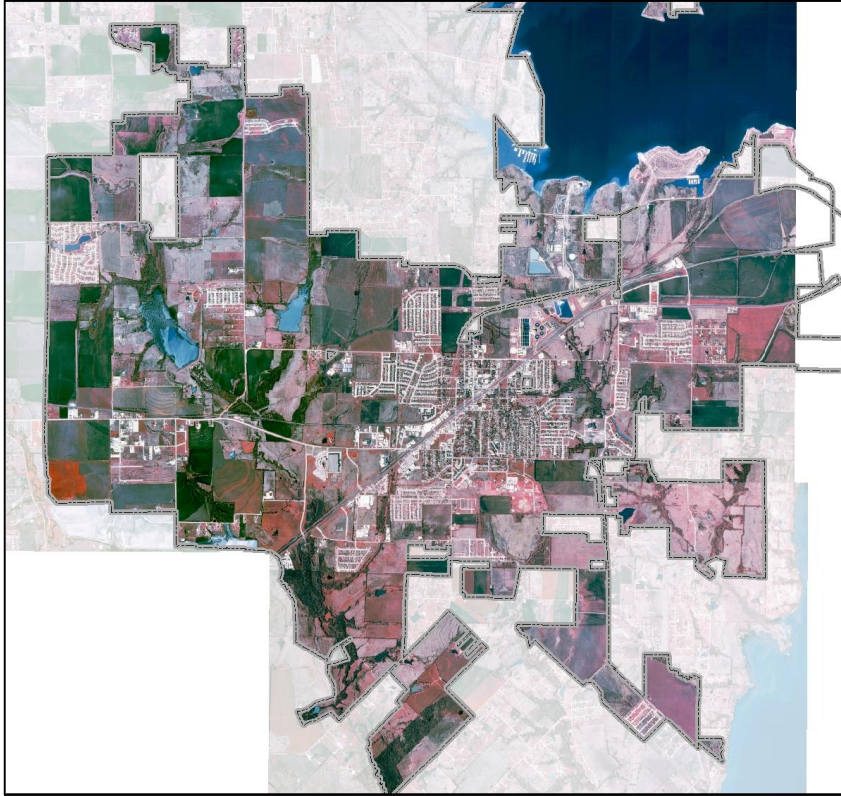
GROWTH PATTERNS

As stated earlier in this chapter, Wylie has had rapid growth over the last two decades. However, it has been the growth in the last ten years that has been most impactful. It is estimated that between 2000 and 2010, Wylie will have grown by 28,550 people (a growth rate of 190%). Considering that much of this population growth has been or will be accommodated at about four dwelling units per acre (based on Wylie's adopted zoning map) and considering the average household size of 3.23 persons per household (illustrated in Table 2.4 earlier in this chapter), this amounts to over 2,200 acres of land being developed over the last ten years in Wylie.

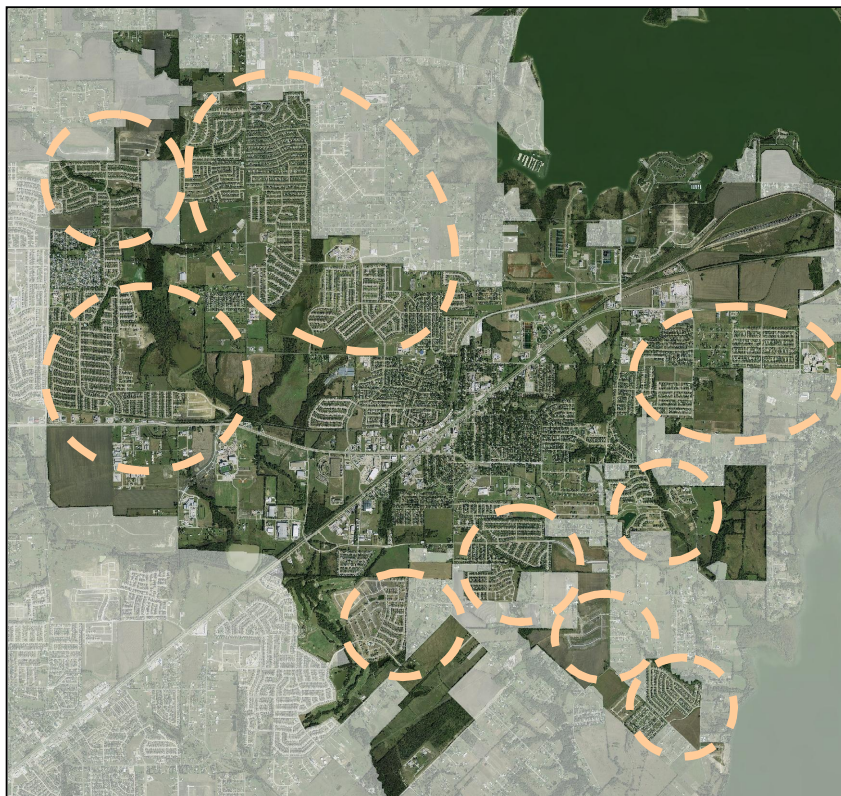
Comparing the two aerial photos on the opposite page, one can see the large areas of urban growth that have occurred between 1999 and 2007. While this does not reflect the exact same period of growth as discussed above, it illustrates the rate at which Wylie is quickly approaching physical build-out conditions. As of March 2009, Wylie is approximately 80% built-out while containing roughly 3,300 acres of undeveloped land and crop/farm land. The map below illustrates the amount of undeveloped, crop/farm, and floodplain land still present within the City as well as City- and other government-owned land. One can see that much of this land is located along the Muddy Creek corridor (west of Country Club Road and extending down toward Pleasant Valley Road on the map below) and the outskirts of the City.



In this map, pasture/cropland is shown in green; farm/ranchland is shown in brown; undeveloped land is shown in yellow; and government-owned land is shown in pink. Floodplain is shown in light green and tan represents developed land



1999 aerial image of Wylie.



2007 aerial image of Wylie. The tan lines outline areas of large residential development since 1999.

The overall result of this rapid population and physical, urban growth is that Wylie is quickly approaching build-out, the growth of population is resulting in increased demand for City services, and the amount of land available for parks, recreation, and open space is quickly diminishing.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is not the first plan for Wylie seeks to address some of these issues surrounding the City's growth. In 1999, Wylie adopted its current Comprehensive Master Plan which provides a roadmap for future city growth (the Future Land Use Map was updated in 2005). The Comprehensive Master Plan adopted several goals as shown below.

1. Quality of Life
 - Provide a plan which will distinguish Wylie from the existing suburban sprawl patterns which are characteristic of Collin County.
 - Preserve and enhance significant community features, such as Wylie's downtown district.
 - Provide a plan which will expand the housing types, quality, and price range in Wylie.
 - Protect, preserve, and enhance existing and future residential neighborhoods.
 - Protect natural and environmentally sensitive areas as well as the remaining open space.
2. Land Use
 - Provide a conceptual focus for new development and larger development patterns.
 - Reinforce and expand Wylie's historic downtown.
 - Provide a connection or linkage with the lakes near Wylie.
 - Provide for a diversified local economy.
3. Thoroughfares & Access
 - Provide the highest quality, safest, and most efficient system of moving people and goods within and through Wylie.
 - Provide a system that directly responds to and reinforces the land use plan.
 - Provide a regional system for moving pedestrians and bicycles, which connects to existing and planned systems.
4. SH 78 and FM 544 Corridors
 - Provide a vision which increases quality, development standards, sense of place, and circulation access.
 - Provide a system of circulation management that will control the number of curb cuts and access into a property on the major highways.
 - Encourage redevelopment and aesthetic quality of the corridors to more closely reflect the quality of life offered by Wylie.
5. Implementation
 - Encourage citizen involvement and community participation through the planning process.
 - Provide guidance on future planning and development decisions for the City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission.

- Provide the basis for updating the City's zoning and development standards.

Many of these goals are applicable to this Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan; specifically, the following goals directly apply to this plan:

- Provide a plan which will distinguish Wylie from the existing suburban sprawl patterns which are characteristic of Collin County (*Quality of Life*).
- Preserve and enhance significant community features, such as Wylie's downtown district (*Quality of Life*).
- Protect, preserve, and enhance existing and future residential neighborhoods (*Quality of Life*).
- Protect natural and environmentally sensitive areas as well as the remaining open space (*Quality of Life*).
- Provide a connection or linkage with the lakes near Wylie (*Land Use*).
- Provide a regional system for moving pedestrians and bicycles, which connects to existing and planned systems (*Thoroughfares & Access*).
- Encourage citizen involvement and community participation through the planning process (*Implementation*).

The Comprehensive Plan's goals, which are currently adopted by the City and have been guiding Wylie's growth over the past ten years, will also shape this Master Plan. In addition to considering these goals, goals specific to this Master Plan are shown in Chapter 1 ó Introduction.

TRENDS IN PARKS & RECREATION

The parks, open spaces, and recreational offerings of a City play a large role in defining quality of life and the City's identity or image. Relative to the mobile nature of society today, especially in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, these offerings play a large role in determining where people choose to reside and therefore maintaining population and economic growth. It is therefore important to understand regional and national trends in recreation and cultural amenities in order to ensure that Wylie can attract and retain residents and businesses into the future. Below, several of the most prevalent trends in recreation and culture today are discussed. These are expected to carry forward into the near future and to be relevant for the lifespan of this Master Plan.

Outdoor Recreation Trends

- One of the most important and impactful trends in parks and recreation today is the increased demand for passive recreation activities and facilities. Passive recreation, as compared to active recreation, includes activities such as walking on trails, cycling, picnicking, enjoying nature, bird watching, and other activities that focus not on organized, high-intensity pastimes like league athletics (which has long been the focus of parks and recreation departments nationwide) but rather on the individual. People desire opportunities to use parks and open space on their own time and in their own way.
- Across the North Texas region, the provision of trails is the top priority for citizens. Numerous telephone surveys, public meetings, questionnaires, and in-person interviews

have shown that people, on average, place the importance of trails above the provision of any other single type of recreation amenity or facility. Many factors contribute to this, including the demand for passive recreation (as discussed above), greater focus on health, rising gas costs, and increasing funding opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

- Related to the previous two trends, the protection of and access to open space and natural areas is growing in popularity across the nation. As people are increasingly using trails, they generally prefer to use trails that are located in scenic areas in order to "get away" from the city and enjoy being outdoors.
- While passive recreation is in greater demand, active recreation activities still play a large role in cities' parks and recreation systems. One major trend over the last few years regionally has been changing participation rates in various city-sponsored league sports. Examples of these changing participation rates include decreased participation in youth softball, dramatically increased participation in youth soccer, and the emergence of new league sports such as adult soccer and youth lacrosse.

Indoor Recreation Trends

- There is a movement away from multiple smaller recreation centers to larger regional centers that are within 15-20 minutes travel time of its users. This trend responds to increased diversity of programming that can be provided at these larger centers, while also being more convenient for families to recreate together in a multi-generational setting, and increasing staff efficiency.
- There is a trend of combining dry side recreation with indoor aquatics for wellness and leisure activities. This again reduces initial cost and reduces continuing costs of staff and operations while providing more activity choices for visitors.
- Locating separate senior activity areas within a large community center is another trend. The senior component would generally have its own exterior entrance distinct from that of the recreation center. This would provide autonomy of the senior component while providing convenient access to the various opportunities in a recreation center including indoor walking track, warm water exercising and properly sized exercise areas. Even so, many in the Baby Boomer generation, while perhaps classified as seniors, do not necessarily identify themselves as such and desire closer integration with younger adults.
- Many cities today are seeking a higher fee structure to help offset operational costs. Observation reveals a range from a 50-60% recapture rate all the way to a 100% recapture rate in the North Texas Region.
- University students today have elaborate leisure¹ aquatic facilities at their disposal. This is the first generation coming out of the university that has expectations for cities to

¹ The use of the term "leisure" here is to differentiate this type of aquatic facility from a competitive aquatic facility, which many universities also have.

provide comparable facilities. Quality of life is an important component of their job search and residence decision and has influenced what new centers will provide.

- Large meeting rooms with a stage, lights, and sound system that accommodate modest seating levels (200-300) are being provided in many community centers today to partially address the needs of arts and culture activities such as dance, theater, and vocal performance.

General Trends

- As North Texas cities and towns continue to grow and expand, citizens are becoming increasingly aware of the diminishing amounts of open space and natural areas in and around their communities. Similarly, this increased awareness parallels an increased interest in preserving open spaces, rural landscapes, and natural areas along creeks, lakes, wooded areas, prairies, and other environmentally and culturally significant locations.
- Related to this increased interest in the preservation of open spaces and natural areas is an increased interest among citizens to consider alternative development strategies within their communities in order to preserve and provide access to natural areas, decrease traffic congestion, enhance property values, and increase and enhance recreation opportunities within their community. Alternative development strategies often considered include mixed-use development, new urbanism, and conservation development (see Appendix C for a further discussion on these alternative strategies).
- The attributes of a community play a large role in attracting (or detracting) a talented workforce to a city or region. Research shows that the quality of a city's environment (its climate, park space, and natural resources) is the most significant factor in attracting "talent." As such, high-quality, high-quantity parks and open space systems will attract a talented workforce while low-quality, low-quantity parks and open space systems will *detract* a talented workforce. The tables on the next page illustrate the importance of a city's environment on economic and workforce development.



Table 2.7
City Attributes Attracting Americans

City Attribute	Score	Rank 09	Rank 07
Environment . Climate, Park Space, Natural Resources	1106	1	1
Affordability . Cost of Living, including Housing	941	2	4
Entertainment . Arts, Culture, Dining, Music, Recreation	758	3	3
Opportunity . Professional and Personal (for Self or Spouse)	654	4	2
Family . Great Place to Raise Children or Support Elderly	638	5	5
Community . Connectivity and Sense of Place	531	6	6
Image . Appearance and Reputation	481	7	8
People . Backgrounds, Talents, Perspectives	431	8	7
Health and Safety . Care and Protection	378	9	9
Transportation . Ease of Travel	266	10	9

Adapted from: Schweyer, Allan. National Talent Markets – 2009: A Study by the Human Capital Institute.

Table 2.8
City Attributes Detracting Americans

City Attribute	Score	Rank 09	Rank 07
Environment . Climate, Park Space, Natural Resources	928	1	1
Health and Safety . Care and Protection	892	2	3
Image . Appearance and Reputation	879	3	2
Affordability . Cost of Living, including Housing	839	4	4
Community . Connectivity and Sense of Place	659	5	5
People . Backgrounds, Talents, Perspectives	603	6	6
Family . Great Place to Raise Children or Support Elderly	451	7	7
Transportation . Ease of Travel	388	8	8
Opportunity . Professional and Personal (for Self or Spouse)	341	9	7
Entertainment . Arts, Culture, Dining, Music, Recreation	235	10	9

Adapted from: Schweyer, Allan. National Talent Markets – 2009: A Study by the Human Capital Institute.